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THE BUFFALO CONFERENCES

Committee was called together early in January, and the program outlined. The secretary, Mr. A. L. Bowen, proceeded in his efforts to secure the best speakers from all parts of the country. The program shows that one or more of the experts in each line of social service was provided and present at each of the sessions. Among these may be mentioned Dr. Lightner Witmer, Dr. Hastings H. Hart, Dr. Katherine B. Davis, Owen R. Lovejoy, Dr. Arthur Holmes, Dr. Graham Taylor and Dr. John Webster Melody, together with Governor Dunne.

This array of "talent" was offered to the public of Rockford in an attractively designed program, and interspersed with the very best music any community could offer, coupled with the high degree of intelligent interest in the community, resulted in large audiences, and much enthusiasm at all the sessions. Lively discussion was awakened at the last session by a debate on the question: "Should Sex Hygiene Be Taught in the Schools?"

Altogether, the meeting seemed much like a national conference, with the secretary and president of that body as speakers. Or, better still, one felt that the civic community had gathered for counsel, since the chief executive was ably supported by a full representation of his board of administration, the State Charities Commission, and the State Civil Service Commission. Few platitudes were indulged in, and all speakers showed a disposition to deal with vital issues of prevention and correction.

In its growing strength the conference proposes to become more and more a missionary body. In response to an urgent call from La Salle, Illinois, saying "We need you," the next meeting will be held in that Cherry mine region of factories and farms, where poverty and plenty dwell in close proximity. Dr. Emil G. Hirsch was chosen president, and will lead his host of social workers to the mount of greater achievement during the coming year.

EMORY F. LYON, Supt. Central Howard Association, Chicago.

The Buffalo Conferences on Education of Special Classes and Probation.
—The Tenth Annual Conference on the education of Backward, Truant, Delinquent and Dependent children, and the Fifth Annual Conference of the National Probation Association were held in Buffalo, N. Y., August 25th, 27th and 28th.

The annual meetings of these two organizations have heretofore been held in conjunction with the National Conference of Charities and Corrections, usually just preceding the meetings of the last named body. This year a sufficient number of the members of the two bodies were not able to make the long trip to Seattle to meet with the larger body, and it was decided to hold the annual conference in Buffalo. As a result of this arrangement the attendance was not so large as usual. Many of those who formerly attended the National Conference of Charities and Correction, and one or both of the others, this year went to Seattle to the former. While the meetings were smaller, it gave greater opportunity for open and free discussion, with a chance for all present who cared to participate. With many of the country's recognized authorities on the subjects under discussion present, the meetings were declared by all as most interesting and profitable. The interests of these

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two bodies are in the main identical, as may be illustrated by the fact that the Honorable George S. Addams, Judge of the Juvenile Court of Cleveland, **President of last year's National Probation Association**, was this year president of the other conference. The problems of one are so similar to those of the other that it has been customary to hold a number of joint sessions for a discussion of mutual problems. The National Probation Association has to do with juveniles, both delinquent and dependent, and delinquent adults, and the other conference deals exclusively with juveniles, both delinquent and dependent, with particular attention to the care of them in institutions for correction or care, and their supervision after being released.

The program of both conferences reflect the present day attitude in matters relating to better systems of education. A general acceptance of the importance of identification and classification of the mental defective and the possibility of the extension of education in matters of sex hygiene to the juvenile delinquent.

The failure of the present school's curriculum to interest and hold the child in school and to furnish him with a training that fits him for every day life, and the resultant effects upon delinquency were pointed out. Plans for courses of study which have been in successful operation for a number of years, involving practical problems that touch his every day life were offered. These courses included vocational training that would be highly beneficial to him in life, and at the same time be sufficiently attractive to keep the boy or girl in school. By careful arrangement, what is commonly known as the purely academic features of his education, are not neglected. Much of value has been learned from the experiences of industrial schools of a custodial or correctional character in the courses of training, provided for their inmates, practically all of whom must earn their own living.

The truant problem was held to be one for solution by the school authorities rather than the Juvenile Court, except perhaps, in the case of the truant, who is semi-delinquent. The Compulsory Department of the Board of Education should be able to handle the majority of its cases out of court.

The problem of the mental defective has received much attention in the meetings of these two conferences the past two years, as it has in the discussions of the National Conferences of Charities and Corrections and the American Prison Congress. It is coming to be generally recognized that a large number of our delinquents are defective, and must be treated as such. Conservative estimate has placed the number higher than most were willing to accept at first, but is not willing to accept the figures of some that practically all are mentally deficient. How to detect the defective delinquent brought up the question of method. In the matter of diagnosis, few psychologists used the same methods, consequently they get widely varying results. A standardized system of tests, so far as possible, was strongly urged. Various means of extinction, eugenics, sterilization and segregation were suggested. A program for the care of the feeble minded as at present contemplated in New Jersey, provides for the purchase of unimproved land at a low price, and by employing the higher grades of the feeble minded, properly supervised in the process of clearing and improving, making the land valuable for cultivation, and making possible its sale at a profit. This profit to be devoted to the maintenance of those employed. The profits are not expected to entirely off-

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set the expenses, but to aid materially. By conducting numerous small colonies in various sections of the state, using inexpensive, movable houses that may be moved from one colony to another, the expense will be reduced to a minimum. The beneficent result of the outdoor life upon the patient is not to be overlooked. This plan is novel and will be watched with interest by all interested in the care of defectives. The need for intelligent instruction in sex hygiene was agreed to be especially desirable for delinquent girls.

It was the general opinion that the Mothers' Pension Act had justified itself is evidenced by the action of twenty states in passing laws granting some sort of relief to mothers of dependent children. There still is much diversity of opinion regarding those the relief should be extended to, and the administration of the same. Most everyone is willing to admit that only the ground plan has been laid, and that much is to be done in working out methods.

The advisability of extension of probation to adults convicted of felonies has proven itself highly successful, as was proven by the figures for Erie County, N. Y., which includes Buffalo. Forty-five per cent of all cases coming before the court were placed on probation. Of these, eighty-eight per cent were convicted of felonies and seventy-three per cent of all placed on probation were discharged with improvement. The excellent financial result in the saving to the families and the county have so impressed the county, that a new building is to be erected and devoted to the use of the probation department. The next meeting of both organizations will be held next year in Memphis in conjunction with the National Conference of Charities and Correction.

HARRY HILL,

Assistant Chief Probation Officer, Cook Co., Ill.

National Criminal Tendencies.—*Law Times* recently published the following interesting statement:

"A Paris contemporary has been instructing its readers upon the specialties of the various foreign delinquents who come before the criminal courts in the French capital. English and Americans, we read, generally have to answer charges of picking pockets. Russians and Spaniards are swindlers. Turks have to answer acts of violence, and Belgians fraud and forgery. The Italian is generally charged with unlawful wounding; the Arab with offenses against decency. The Hungarian is noted for mendacity and the white-slave traffic. The German specialty is usury or trade cheating."

R. H. G.

Vindicating the Law.—Recently we received an enquiry for information concerning the treatment of the Newark, Ohio, lynchings in 1910. The following appeared in the *Chicago Tribune* for January 4, 1912. It answers the query and may be of interest to others: "It is said, with some justice, that the knowledge of what has been done to punish the lynchings of Carl Etherington, in Newark, Ohio, July 10, 1910, will never be spread as widely as was the knowledge of the crime. People will remember what lynchings did in Newark without knowing what law in Newark did to the lynchings.

"For that reason there is the more cause for recording that the trials, recently brought to an end, resulted in thirty convictions, one for murder in the second degree, thirteen for manslaughter, seven for riot and nine for assault and battery. If some of the sentences seem inadequate it must be remembered that in mob misrule there are varying degrees of guilt, and that Newark and